



H.R. 5856 – DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITY AUTHORIZATION AND LEASE ACT OF 2008

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 5856 is being considered on the House floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Rep. Michael Michaud (D-ME) on April 22, 2008. The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs approved the bill by voice vote on May 15, 2008.

H.R. 5856 is expected to be considered on the House floor on May 20, 2008.

SUMMARY

Major Medical Facility Projects: H.R. 5856 authorizes \$345.9 million for three major Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) medical facility projects in Palo Alto, California, San Antonio, Texas, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Modifications to Previous Authorization Levels: In addition, the bill provides \$1.7 billion for modifications to projects that were authorized in the Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-461).

Leases: The bill authorizes \$60.1 million for the Secretary of the VA to carry out leases for twelve major medical facilities. It also provides \$54.5 million for the construction of a new VA medical facility in Okaloosa County, Florida.

Reports: H.R. 5856 requires the Secretary provide Congress with an annual report on community-based outpatient clinics.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) operates medical facilities to deliver health care benefits to our nation's veterans. Their health care system is made up of more than 153 medical centers, 872 ambulatory care and community-based outpatient clinics, 135 nursing homes, 45 residential rehabilitation treatment programs, 209 Veterans Centers, and 108 comprehensive home-care programs.

According to the most recent data released by the VA, approximately 5.5 million people received care in a VA health care facility during 2006. This represents a 29 percent increase in the number of patients treated since 2001.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates "that implementing H.R. 5856 would cost \$146 million in 2009 and about \$2.2 billion over the 2009-2013 period, assuming appropriation of the authorized and estimated amounts. CBO estimates that enacting the bill would have no effect on direct spending or revenues." ([CBO Cost Estimate](#))

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information contact Brianne Miller at (202) 226-2302.